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SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2035/02/22
TAGS: [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [AF](#) [LG](#)
SUBJECT: LATVIA IN AFGHANISTAN: UNABLE TO PROVIDE MORE TROOPS BUT
INCREASING CIVILIAN ASSISTANCE

REF: STATE 14366; RIGA 43

CLASSIFIED BY: Brian Phipps, POL/ECON Counselor; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) We delivered reftel A demarche to Judite Dobeles, the Head of the Latvian MFA's Asia, Africa and Oceania Division. Dobeles said that the GOL currently has 175 soldiers serving in Afghanistan and has no current plans to increase its military presence there.

¶2. (SBU) Latvia is increasing its civilian assistance to Afghanistan. This year Latvia will send two additional police officers, supplementing the one already deployed, to Afghanistan to train the Afghan police (Ref B). In March Latvia will spend 10,000 Latvian lats (about 20,000 USD) to bring Afghan criminal investigators to Latvia for training. (Ref B).

¶3. (C) Comment: While Dobeles did not say that Latvia can not afford to send more troops to Afghanistan, that is the case. Latvia is already doing all it can. In spite of Latvia's severe economic contraction (the loss of over 20% in GDP over the last two years), the government remains committed to sustaining its existing contribution of troops that serve without caveats. The Foreign Ministry and Defense Ministry share a strong desire to demonstrate international responsibility and continued solidarity with the United States on Afghanistan.
GARBER